

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 14-26 and 28-29 are presently active in this case. The present Amendment amends Claims 14, 28-29; and cancels Claims 27 and 30.

The outstanding Office Action rejected Claims 14, and 27-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Hirt (U.S. Patent No. 6,755,089) in view of Hennequet (U.S. Patent No. 6,389,919).

Claims 15-26 were allowed and Claim 30 was indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form.¹ Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter. In response, the features of allowable Claim 30 (and intervening Claim 27) are incorporated into independent Claim 14. Thus, Claims 27 and 30 are canceled, and the dependency of Claims 28-29 is changed from Claim 27 to Claim 14. Accordingly, Claims 14 and 28-29 are believed to be allowable.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 14-26 and 28-29 is earnestly solicited.

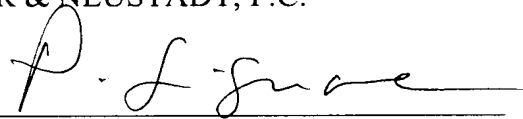
¹ During a telephone conversation on July 7, 2008, between the Examiner and the undersigned, the Examiner confirmed that Claim 30 is allowable in spite of the language at page 3, lines 4-7, which erroneously refers to the features of Claim 30 instead of those of Claim 29.

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Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "P. J. Signore", written over a horizontal line.

Philippe J.C. Signore, Ph.D.
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 43,922

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 08/07)